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**Cassanova**

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(54) **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PRESENTING INFORMATION ASSOCIATED WITH A MEDIA PROGRAM**

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21, 2012, now Pat. No. 8,825,622, which is a division  
of application No. 12/896,827, filed on Oct. 1, 2010,  
now Pat. No. 8,271,534.

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**H04H 60/37** (2008.01)  
**H04N 21/442** (2011.01)  
**H04N 21/858** (2011.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ..... **H04N 21/482** (2013.01); **G06F 17/30**

(2013.01); **H04H 60/37** (2013.01); **H04N**  
**21/442** (2013.01); **H04N 21/858** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC ..... G06F 17/30  
USPC ..... 707/600–899  
See application file for complete search history.

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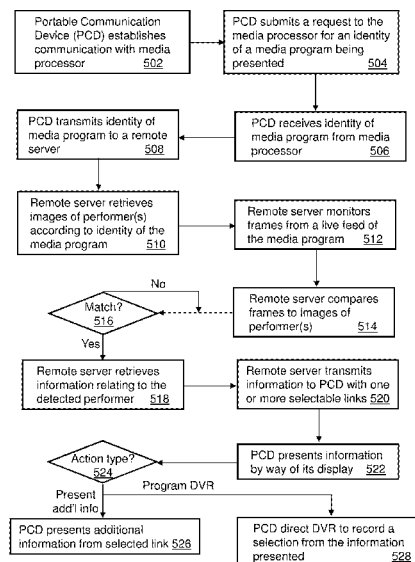
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Douglas Schnabel

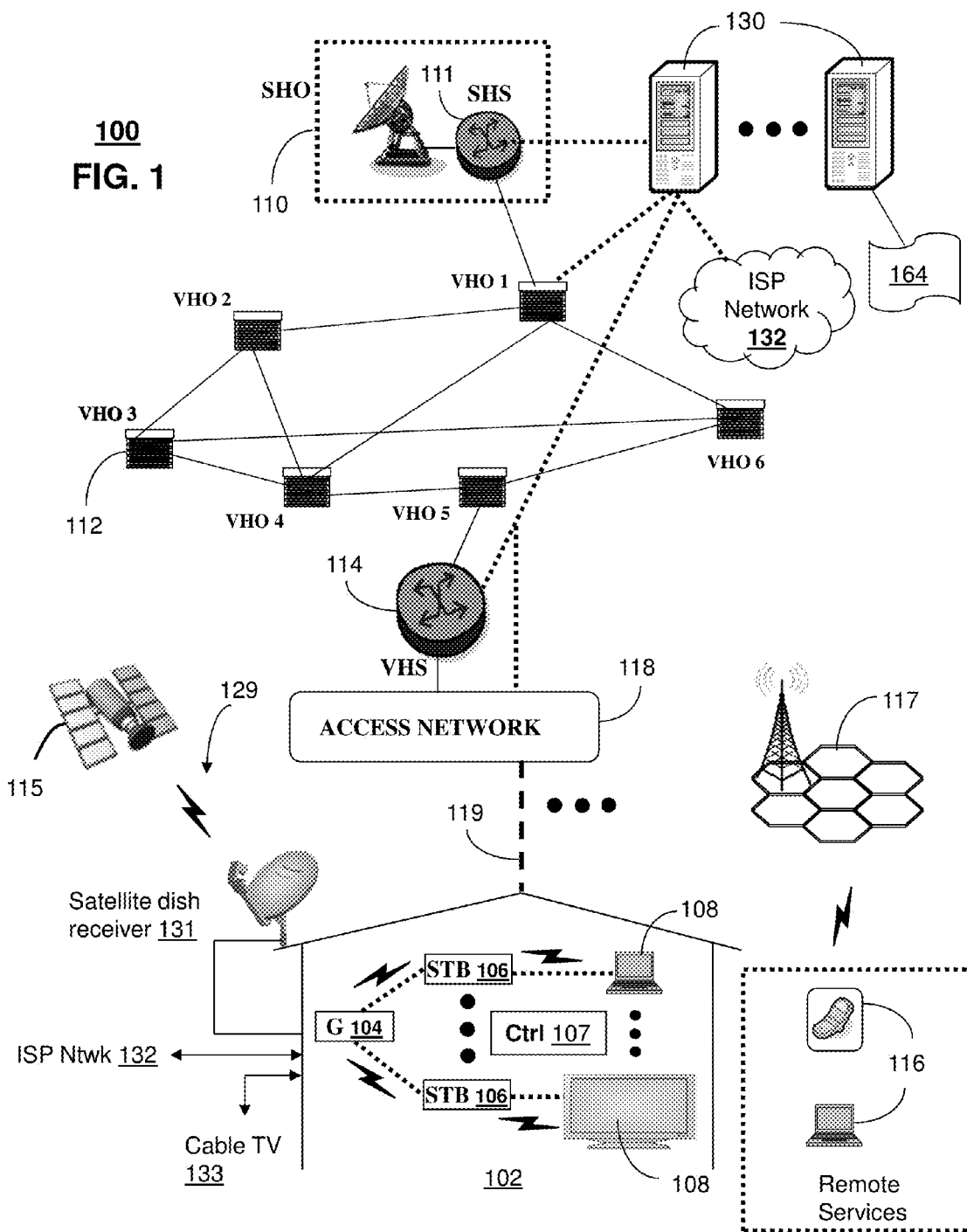
(57) **ABSTRACT**

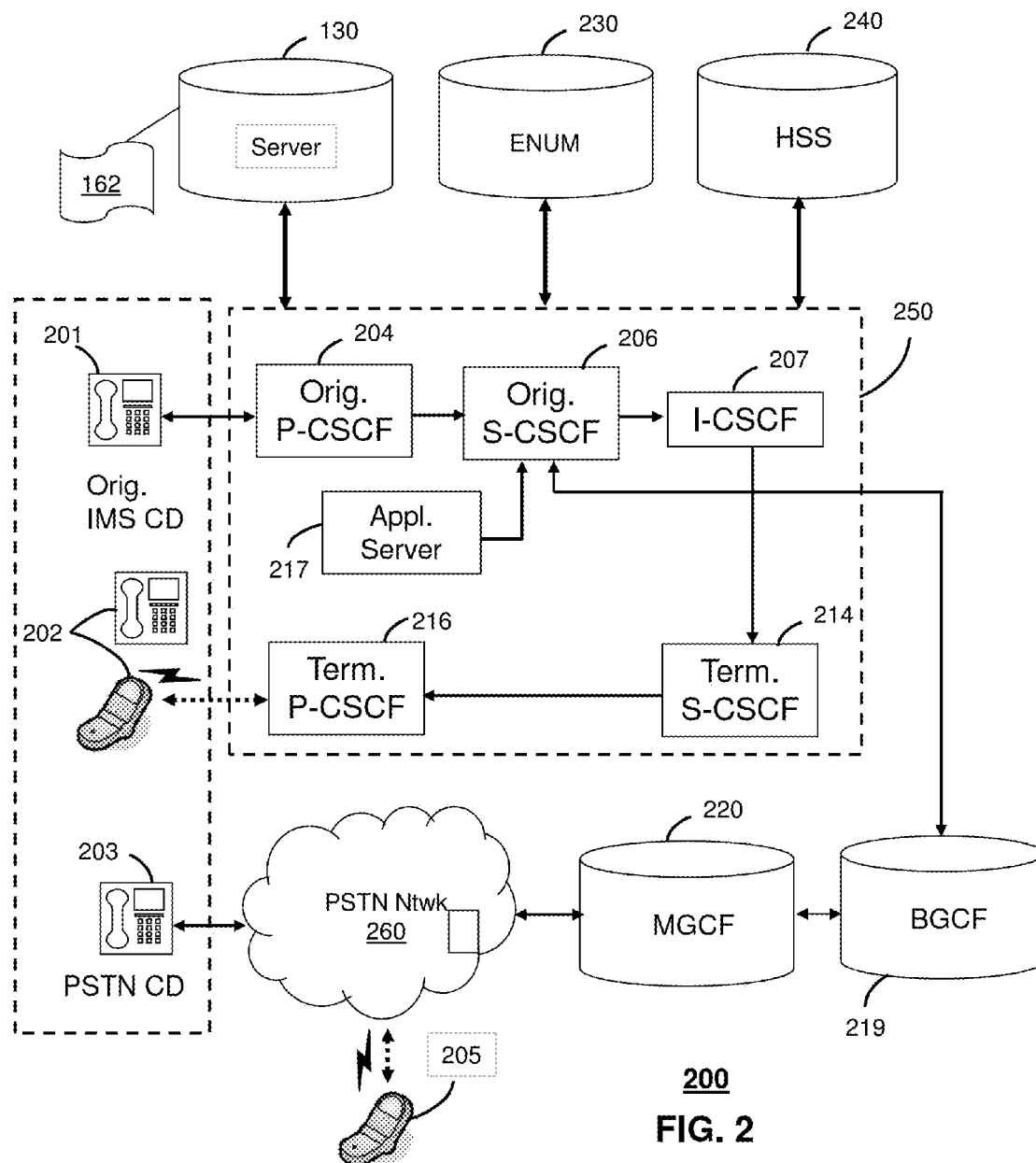
A system that incorporates teachings of the present disclosure may include, for example, an apparatus having a processor adapted to receive a message from a portable communication device communicatively coupled to a set-top box presenting a media program and to retrieve from the message a media descriptor associated with the media program. The processor is further adapted to identify according to the media descriptor one or more images of one or more performers commonly presented in the media program, to monitor one or more frames of a live media feed including the media program, and compare the one or more human figures to the one or more images of performers. The processor can also be adapted to recognize a performer from the comparison, to retrieve information associated with the performer, and to transmit the information to the portable communication device. Other embodiments are disclosed.

**20 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets**

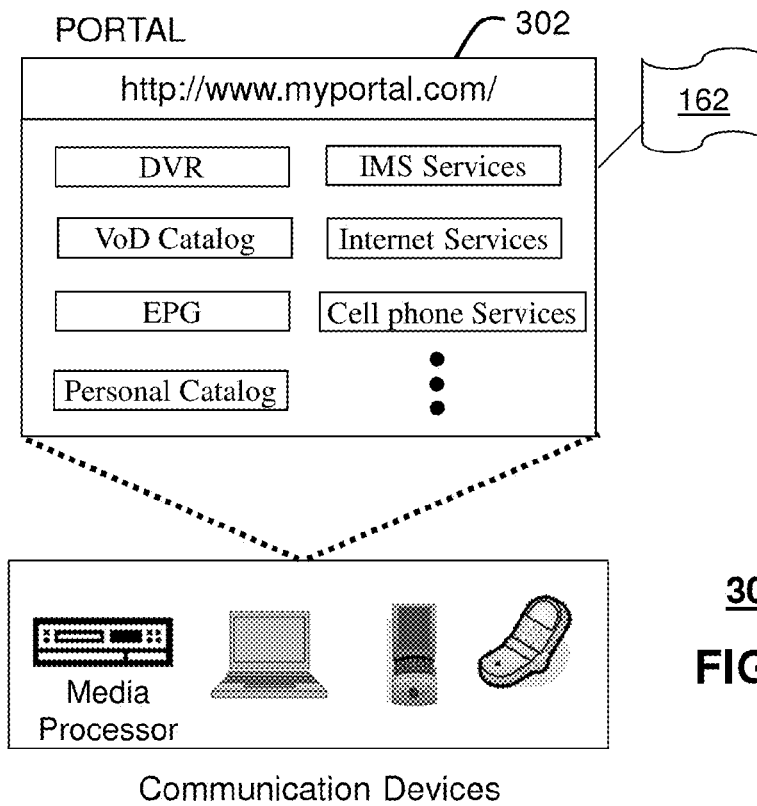


**FIG. 1**

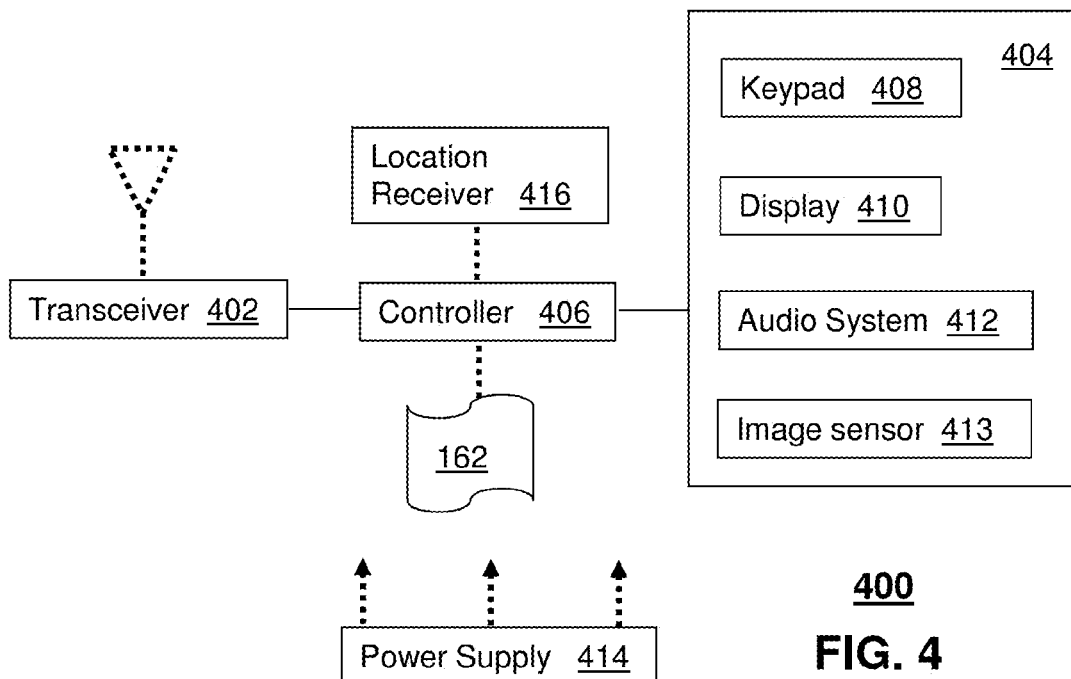




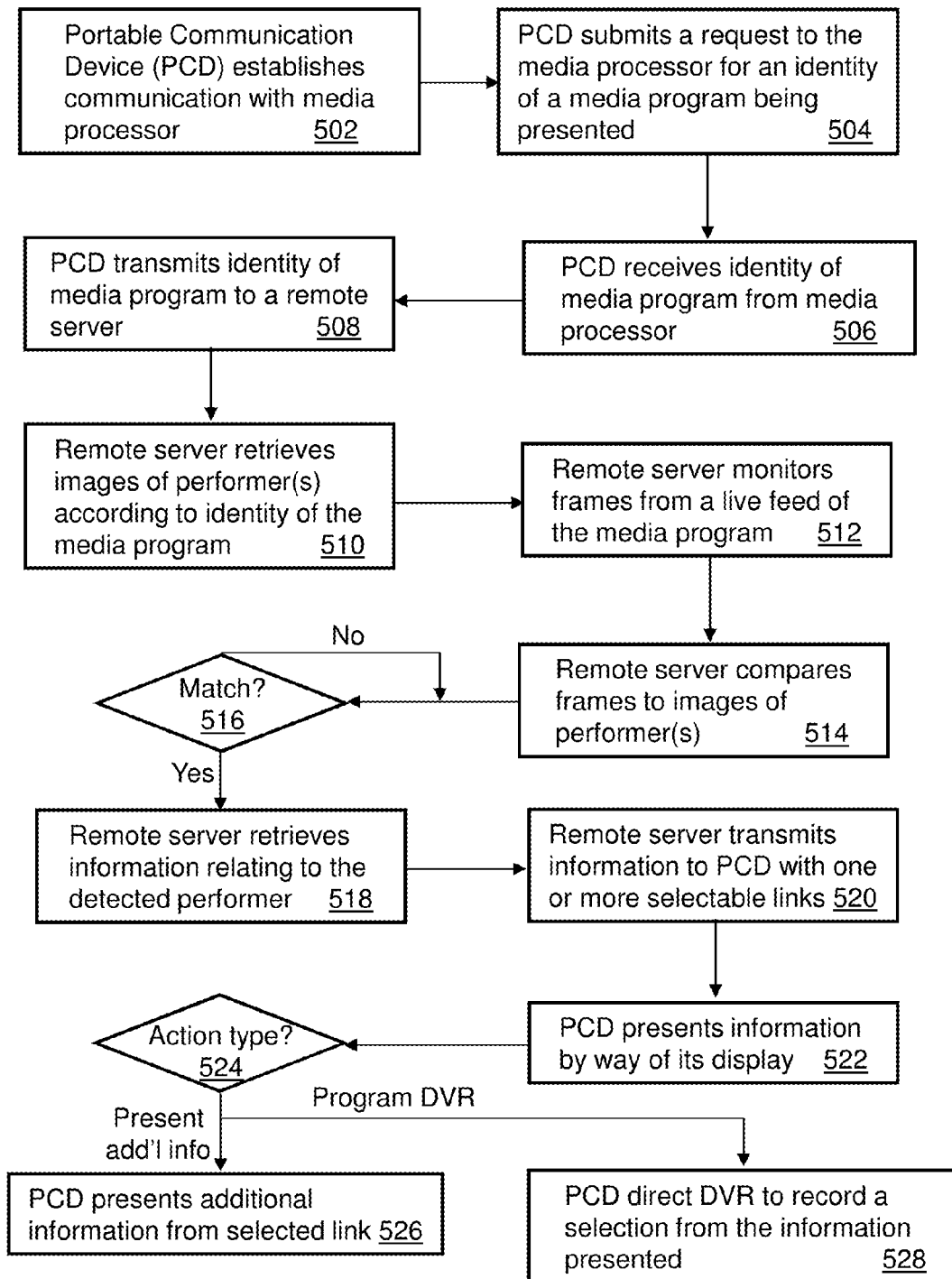
**FIG. 2**



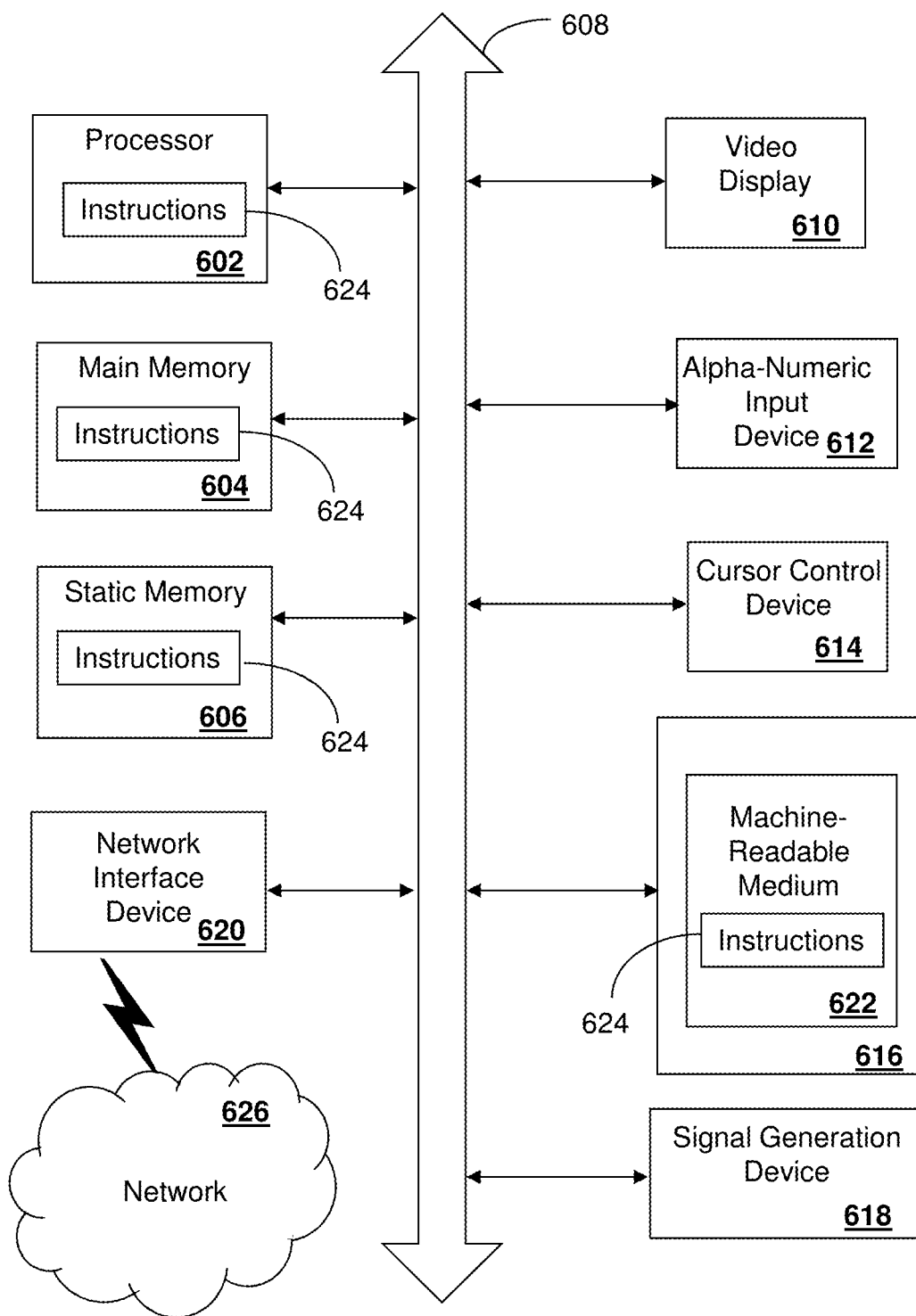
**300**  
**FIG. 3**



**400**  
**FIG. 4**



500  
FIG. 5



**600**  
**FIG. 6**

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# SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PRESENTING INFORMATION ASSOCIATED WITH A MEDIA PROGRAM

## CLAIM OF PRIORITY

This application is a divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/590,810, filed Aug. 21, 2012, which is a divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/896,827, filed Oct. 1, 2010, which are both incorporated herein by reference in their entirety.

## FIELD OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present disclosure relates generally to information collection techniques.

## BACKGROUND

Media communication systems such as cable TV, satellite TV, and Internet Protocol TV can provide subscribers with hundreds of channel options collectively presenting media programs that span an expansive genre. Consequently, viewers have a rich selection of media programs they can choose from. With such a broad scope of content, subscribers may encounter many actors and actresses that may or may not be known to the subscribers.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGS. 1-2 depict illustrative embodiments of communication systems that provide media services;

FIG. 3 depicts an illustrative embodiment of a web portal for interacting with the communication systems of FIGS. 1-2;

FIG. 4 depicts an illustrative embodiment of a communication device utilized in the communication systems of FIGS. 1-2;

FIG. 5 depicts an illustrative embodiment of a method operating in portions of the systems described in FIGS. 1-4; and

FIG. 6 is a diagrammatic representation of a machine in the form of a computer system within which a set of instructions, when executed, may cause the machine to perform any one or more of the methodologies discussed herein.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The present disclosure describes, among other things, illustrative embodiments of a portable communication device that receives information relating to performers recognized by a remote server by monitoring a live feed of a media program. Other embodiments are contemplated by the present disclosure.

One embodiment of the present disclosure includes an apparatus having a processor adapted to receive a message from a portable communication device communicatively coupled to a set-top box presenting a media program and to retrieve from the message a media descriptor associated with the media program. The processor is further adapted to identify according to the media descriptor one or more images of one or more performers commonly presented in the media program, to monitor one or more frames of a live media feed including the media program, and to compare the one or more human figures to the one or more images of performers. The processor can also be adapted to recognize a performer from

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the comparison, to retrieve information associated with the performer, and to transmit the information to the portable communication device.

One embodiment of the present disclosure includes a portable communication device having a processor adapted to communicatively couple to a media processor presenting a media program, to determine an identity of the media program, and to transmit the identity to a remote server. The remote server can in turn be operable to retrieve one or more images of performers according to the identity received from the portable communication device, to monitor one or more frames of a live media feed of the media program, and to detect from the one or more frames one or more human figures. The remote server can be further operable to compare the one or more human figures to the one or more images of performers, and to recognize a performer from the comparison.

One embodiment of the present disclosure includes a method for presenting a media program at a presentation device, receiving from a portable communication device a request to identify the media program, and transmitting an identity of the media program to the portable communication device. The portable communication device can be operable to transmit the identity to a remote server. The remote server can in turn be operable to recognize a performer from the media program and to transmit information associated with the performer to the portable communication device.

FIG. 1 depicts an illustrative embodiment of a first communication system **100** for delivering media content. The communication system **100** can represent an Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) media system. The IPTV media system can include a super head-end office (SHO) **110** with at least one super headend office server (SHS) **111** which receives media content from satellite and/or terrestrial communication systems. In the present context, media content can represent, for example, audio content, moving image content such as 2D or 3D videos, video games, virtual reality content, still image content, and combinations thereof. The SHS server **111** can forward packets associated with the media content to one or more video head-end servers (VHS) **114** via a network of video head-end offices (VHO) **112** according to a common multicast communication protocol.

The VHS **114** can distribute multimedia broadcast content via an access network **118** to commercial and/or residential buildings **102** housing a gateway **104** (such as a residential or commercial gateway). The access network **118** can represent a group of digital subscriber line access multiplexers (DSLAMs) located in a central office or a service area interface that provide broadband services over fiber optical links or copper twisted pairs **119** to buildings **102**. The gateway **104** can use common communication technology to distribute broadcast signals to media processors **106** such as Set-Top Boxes (STBs) which in turn present broadcast channels to media devices **108** such as computers or television sets managed in some instances by a media controller **107** (such as an infrared or RF remote control).

The gateway **104**, the media processors **106**, and media devices **108** can utilize tethered communication technologies (such as coaxial, powerline or phone line wiring) or can operate over a wireless access protocol such as Wireless Fidelity (WiFi), Bluetooth, Zigbee, or other present or next generation local or personal area wireless network technologies. By way of these interfaces, unicast communications can also be invoked between the media processors **106** and subsystems of the IPTV media system for services such as video-on-demand (VoD), browsing an electronic programming guide (EPG), or other infrastructure services.

A satellite broadcast television system **129** can be used also in the media system of FIG. 1. The satellite broadcast television system can be overlaid, operably coupled with, or replace the IPTV system as another representative embodiment of communication system **100**. In this embodiment, signals transmitted by a satellite **115** carrying media content can be received by a satellite dish receiver **131** coupled to the building **102**. Modulated signals received by the satellite dish receiver **131** can be transferred to the media processors **106** for demodulating, decoding, encoding, and/or distributing broadcast channels to the media devices **108**. The media processors **106** can be equipped with a broadband port to the ISP network **132** to enable interactive services such as VoD and EPG as described above.

In yet another embodiment, an analog or digital cable broadcast distribution system such as cable TV system **133** can be overlaid, operably coupled with, or replace the IPTV system and/or the satellite TV system as another representative embodiment of communication system **100**. In this embodiment, the cable TV system **133** can also provide Internet, telephony, and interactive media services.

It is contemplated that the present disclosure can apply to any present or next generation over-the-air and/or landline media content services system.

Some of the network elements of the IPTV media system can be coupled to one or more computing devices **130**, a portion of which can operate as a web server for providing web portal services over an Internet Service Provider (ISP) network **132** to wireline media devices **108** or wireless communication devices **116**.

Multiple forms of media services can be offered to media devices over landline technologies such as those described above. Additionally, media services can be offered to media devices by way of a wireless access base station **117** operating according to common wireless access protocols such as Global System for Mobile or GSM, Code Division Multiple Access or CDMA, Time Division Multiple Access or TDMA, Universal Mobile Telecommunications or UMTS, World Interoperability for Microwave or WiMAX, Software Defined Radio or SDR, Long Term Evolution or LTE, and so on). Other present and next generation wide area wireless network technologies are contemplated by the present disclosure.

System **100** can also provide for all or a portion of the computing devices **130** to function as a remote server (herein referred to as remote server **130**). The remote server **130** can use common computing and communication technology to perform function **164** which can include, among other things, the acts of communicating with portable communication devices **116** to provide information relating the performers in a media program presented by a media processor **106** communicatively coupled to the portable communication device **116**.

Illustrative embodiments of methods that can operate in portions of the devices of FIG. 1 are described below.

FIG. 2 depicts an illustrative embodiment of a communication system **200** employing an IP Multimedia Subsystem (IMS) network architecture to facilitate the combined services of circuit-switched and packet-switched systems. Communication system **200** can be overlaid or operably coupled with communication system **100** as another representative embodiment of communication system **100**.

Communication system **200** can comprise a Home Subscriber Server (HSS) **240**, a tElephone NUmber Mapping (ENUM) server **230**, and other common network elements of an IMS network **250**. The IMS network **250** can establish communications between IMS compliant communication

devices (CD) **201**, **202**, Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) CDs **203**, **205**, and combinations thereof by way of a Media Gateway Control Function (MGCF) **220** coupled to a PSTN network **260**. The MGCF **220** is not used when a communication session involves IMS CD to IMS CD communications. Any communication session involving at least one PSTN CD requires the use of the MGCF **220**.

IMS CDs **201**, **202** can register with the IMS network **250** by contacting a Proxy Call Session Control Function (P-CSCF) which communicates with a corresponding Serving CSCF (S-CSCF) to register the CDs with at the HSS **240**. To initiate a communication session between CDs, an originating IMS CD **201** can submit a Session Initiation Protocol (SIP INVITE) message to an originating P-CSCF **204** which communicates with a corresponding originating S-CSCF **206**. The originating S-CSCF **206** can submit the SIP INVITE message to an application server (AS) such as reference **217** that can provide a variety of services to IMS subscribers. For example, the application server **217** can be used to perform originating treatment functions on the calling party number received by the originating S-CSCF **206** in the SIP INVITE message. Originating treatment functions can include determining whether the calling party number has international calling services, and/or is requesting special telephony features (e.g., \*72 forward calls, \*73 cancel call forwarding, \*67 for caller ID blocking, and so on).

Additionally, the originating S-CSCF **206** can submit queries to the ENUM system **230** to translate an E.164 telephone number in the SIP INVITE to a SIP Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) if the terminating communication device is IMS compliant. The SIP URI can be used by an Interrogating CSCF (I-CSCF) **207** to submit a query to the HSS **240** to identify a terminating S-CSCF **214** associated with a terminating IMS CD such as reference **202**. Once identified, the I-CSCF **207** can submit the SIP INVITE to the terminating S-CSCF **214**. The terminating S-CSCF **214** can then identify a terminating P-CSCF **216** associated with the terminating CD **202**. The P-CSCF **216** then signals the CD **202** to establish Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) communication services, thereby enabling the calling and called parties to engage in voice and/or data communications.

If the terminating communication device is instead a PSTN CD such as references **203** or **205**, the ENUM system **230** can respond with an unsuccessful address resolution which can cause the originating S-CSCF **206** to forward the call to the MGCF **220** via a Breakout Gateway Control Function (BGCF) **219**. The MGCF **220** can then initiate the call to the terminating PSTN CD over the PSTN network **260** to enable the calling and called parties to engage in voice communications.

The aforementioned communication process is symmetrical. Accordingly, the terms "originating" and "terminating" in FIG. 2 are interchangeable. It is further noted that communication system **200** can be adapted to support video conferencing. In addition, communication system **200** can be adapted to provide the IMS CDs **201**, **203** with the multimedia and Internet services of communication system **100**.

It is further appreciated that the CDs of FIG. 2 can operate as wireline or wireless devices. Although not shown, the CDs of FIG. 2 can be communicatively coupled to a cellular base station, a femtocell, a WiFi router, a DECT base unit, or another suitable wireless access unit to establish communications with the IMS network **250** of FIG. 2. Accordingly, multiple wireline and wireless communication technologies are contemplated for the CDs of FIG. 2.

System **200** can include or otherwise be coupled with server **130** of FIG. 1 for purposes similar to those described



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above. It is further contemplated by the present disclosure that the remote server **130** can perform function **164** and thereby supply CDs **201**, **202**, **203**, or **205** performer information associated with a monitored media program.

Illustrative embodiments of methods that can operate in portions of the devices of FIG. 2 are described below.

FIG. 3 depicts an illustrative embodiment of a web portal **302** which can be hosted by server applications operating from the computing devices **130** of the communication system **100** illustrated in FIG. 1. The web portal **302** can be used for managing services of communication systems **100-200**. A web page of the web portal **302** can be accessed by a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) with a Internet browser such as Microsoft's Internet Explorer™, Mozilla's Firefox™, Apple's Safari™, or Google's Chrome™ using an Internet-capable communication device such as those described for FIGS. 1-2. The web portal **302** can be configured, for example, to access a media processor **106** and services managed thereby such as a Digital Video Recorder (DVR), a Video on Demand (VoD) catalog, an Electronic Programming Guide (EPG), or a personal catalog (such as personal videos, pictures, audio recordings, etc.) stored in the media processor **106**. The web portal **302** can also be used for provisioning IMS services described earlier, provisioning Internet services, provisioning cellular phone services, and so on.

It is contemplated by the present disclosure that the web portal **302** can further be adapted to manage and provision software applications of the remote server **130**, portable communication devices of FIGS. 1 and 2, and the media processor **106** of FIG. 1. Software function **164** in the remote server **130** can make use of the settings provisioned by the web portable **302** to monitor a live feed and present performer information to the portable communication devices of FIGS. 1 and 2.

Illustrative embodiments of methods that can operate in portions of the web portal **302** of FIG. 3 are described below.

FIG. 4 depicts an exemplary embodiment of a communication device **400**. Communication device **400** can serve in whole or in part as an illustrative embodiment of the devices depicted in FIGS. 1-2. The communication device **400** can comprise a wireline and/or wireless transceiver **402** (herein transceiver **402**), a user interface (UI) **404**, a power supply **414**, a location receiver **416**, and a controller **406** for managing operations thereof. The transceiver **402** can support short-range or long-range wireless access technologies such as Bluetooth, WiFi, Digital Enhanced Cordless Telecommunications (DECT), or cellular communication technologies, just to mention a few. Cellular technologies can include, for example, CDMA-1x, UMTS/HSDPA, GSM/GPRS, TDMA/EDGE, EV/DO, WiMAX, SDR, LTE, as well as other next generation cellular wireless communication technologies as they arise. The transceiver **402** can also be adapted to support circuit-switched wireline access technologies (such as PSTN), packet-switched wireline access technologies (such as TCP/IP, VoIP, etc.), and combinations thereof.

The UI **404** can include a depressible or touch-sensitive keypad **408** with a navigation mechanism such as a roller ball, a joystick, a mouse, or a navigation disk for manipulating operations of the communication device **400**. The keypad **408** can be an integral part of a housing assembly of the communication device **400** or an independent device operably coupled thereto by a tethered wireline interface (such as a USB cable) or a wireless interface supporting for example Bluetooth. The keypad **408** can represent a numeric dialing keypad commonly used by phones, and/or a Qwerty keypad with alphanumeric keys. The UI **404** can further include a display **410** such as monochrome or color LCD (Liquid Crystal Display), OLED (Organic Light Emitting Diode) or other

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suitable display technology for conveying images to an end user of the communication device **400**. In an embodiment where the display **410** is touch-sensitive, a portion or all of the keypad **408** can be presented by way of the display **410** with its navigation features.

The UI **404** can also include an audio system **412** that utilizes common audio technology for conveying low volume audio (such as audio heard only in the proximity of a human ear) and high volume audio (such as speakerphone for hands free operation). The audio system **412** can further include a microphone for receiving audible signals of an end user. The audio system **412** can also be used for voice recognition applications. The UI **404** can further include an image sensor **413** such as a charged coupled device (CCD) camera for capturing still or moving images.

The power supply **414** can utilize common power management technologies such as replaceable and rechargeable batteries, supply regulation technologies, and charging system technologies for supplying energy to the components of the communication device **400** to facilitate long-range or short-range portable applications. The location receiver **416** can utilize common location technology such as a global positioning system (GPS) receiver capable of assisted GPS for identifying a location of the communication device **400** based on signals generated by a constellation of GPS satellites, thereby facilitating common location services such as navigation.

The communication device **400** can use the transceiver **402** to also determine a proximity to a cellular, WiFi, Bluetooth, or other wireless access points by common sensing techniques such as utilizing a received signal strength indicator (RSSI) and/or a signal time of arrival (TOA) or time of flight (TOF). The controller **406** can utilize computing technologies such as a microprocessor, a digital signal processor (DSP), and/or a video processor with associated storage memory such as Flash, ROM, RAM, SRAM, DRAM or other storage technologies.

The communication device **400** can be adapted to perform the functions of the media processor **106**, the media devices **108**, or the portable communication devices **116** of FIG. 1, as well as the IMS CDs **201-202** and PSTN CDs **203-205** of FIG. 2. It will be appreciated that the communication device **400** can also represent other common devices that can operate in communication systems **100-200** of FIGS. 1-2 such as a gaming console and a media player.

It is further contemplated by the present disclosure that the communication device **400** can operate as a remote server **130** performing a function **162** that monitors a live feed and providing performer information determined from aspects of the live feed to a portable communication device.

Illustrative embodiments of methods that can operate in portions of the communication device of FIG. 4 are described below.

FIG. 5 depicts an illustrative method **500** that operates in portions of the devices of FIGS. 1-4. Method **500** can begin with step **502** in which a portable communication device establishes communications with a media processor. A portable communication device can represent multiple forms of wireless devices such as a cellular phone, a personal digital assistant, a smart phone, a tablet, each with long-range wireless capability (e.g., cellular), short-range wireless capability (e.g., WiFi or Bluetooth) capability, or combinations thereof. For illustration purposes, the portable communication device will be referred to by reference **116**. It will be appreciated, however, that other portable devices such as those shown in FIGS. 1-4 are contemplated by the present disclosure. The media processor referred to in step **502**, can represent, for

example, the STB **106** of FIG. **1** which can present media programs such as TV shows, movies, or like programs by way of a presentation device such as a TV set **108**. For illustration purposes, the media processor will be referred to by reference **106**.

With the above embodiments in mind, the portable communication device **116** can establish communications with the media processor **106** by way of a wireless interface such as WiFi, Bluetooth, cellular (e.g., with a femtocell), or other wireless means. Once communications have been established, the portable communication device **116** can be prompted at step **504** to automatically or by a user-initiated prompt to submit a request to the media processor **106** for an identity of a media program (e.g., TV show, HBO movie, etc.) being presented by the media processor **106** at a presentation device **108**.

The portable communication device **116** can be programmed with a user profile configured by a user by way of the web portal **302** to automatically make such requests when coupled to the media processor **106**. Alternatively, the user of the portable communication device **116** can be presented a menu or selectable icons in the UI **404** which, when selected by the user, prompt the portable communication device **116** to submit a request to the media processor **106** in step **504**.

The identity of the media program can be a title of the media program, a program channel presenting the media program (e.g., channel **5**), or other suitable information for identifying the media program. Upon receiving the request, the media processor **106** can identify the media program from metadata supplied by the media communication system (e.g., an EPG). At step **506**, the portable communication device **116** can receive the identity of the media program from the media processor **106**, and at step **508** transmit the identity to the remote server **130**. The portable communication device **116** can transmit this information over the ISP network **132** of FIG. **1**, a data channel of the wireless base station **117** of FIG. **1**, the IMS network **250** of FIG. **2**, or any other suitable communication means for conveying this information to the remote server **130**.

At step **510**, the remote server **130** can retrieve one or more images of performers associated with the media program based on the identity provided in step **508**. For example, suppose a user of the portable communication device **106** is watching a Star Trek episode identified by the media processor **106** by its title. The remote server **130** can search in a (local or remote) database for images of performers associated with the title of the Star Trek episode in question. The images of performers can be collected by a service provider of the media communication system, by a content provider of the media program, or combinations thereof.

Suppose further that the Star Trek episode involves one of the earlier episodes of the Star Trek series with performers such as William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, and so on. The remote server **130** can retrieve in step **510** images from each of these performers. Once the images are in the server's **130** memory, the remote server **130** can be adapted to monitor frames from a live feed of the media program. The remote server **130** can monitor the live feed from a multicast signal generated at a central office (or VHO), or a live feed terminated at or near building **102** where the media processor **106** is located. The remote server **130** can be adapted to monitor frames at periodic intervals that are suitable for analyzing the media program (e.g., monitor frames every quarter second).

As the remote server **130** begins to monitor frames of the media program, it compares human figures detected in one or more frames with the images of performers retrieved in step

**510**. The remote server **130** can utilize image processing technology to identify human figures. The remote server **130** can also be adapted to detect at step **516** a match between the performer images and the human figures. The remote server **130** can be adapted to analyze facial and/or body characteristics of a detected human figure and compare such characteristics to facial and/or body characteristics of the performer images retrieved in step **510**. When a match is detected, the remote server **130** can retrieve in step **518** information relating to the detected performer.

For example, suppose the detected performer is William Shatner. Upon detecting a frame with this performer, the remote server **130** can retrieve from its database information associated with Mr. Shatner. This information can include the performer's history in movies, a list of other movies and TV shows that he's performed in, advertising and/or promotional material associated with the performer. Some or all of this information may be presented as selectable hypertext or hyperlinks. The information can be transmitted by the remote server **130** to the portable communication device **116** by similar wireless communication means used by the portable communication device **116** at step **508**.

At step **522**, the portable communication device **116** can present the information on its display **410**. When more than one performer is detected, the presentation can be organized in quadrants so that the user can visualize each performer's information simultaneously. For a portable communication device **116** having a large form-factor such as a tablet display (e.g., iPad™), an organizational structure based on a quadrant segmentation of the display **410** can be useful. For portable communication devices **116** having small displays (e.g., a cellular phone), there may only be room for presenting one performer at a time. In such instances, the portable communication device **116** can be adapted so that a user can manipulate the UI **404** to scroll between performers by swiping a touch-display or scrolling between hidden views with a navigation mechanism such as a disk with four depressible sections (left, right, up, down).

The portable communication device **116** can be further adapted to detect in step **524** selections made by the user by way of the UI **404** from the selectable links presented in the information. The portable communication device **116** can act on these selections in a number of ways depending on the function of the selectable link. For example, the information presented at step **522** can include a number of selectable links for viewing a biography of the performer (e.g., William Shatner's life), a documentary of movies and TV shows involving the performer, downloadable movies or TV shows from one or more media sources involving the performer, an EPG that presents upcoming shows including the performer, links to websites associated with the performer, links to advertisements and promotional materials, and so on.

For informational links such as web pages, the portable communication device **116** can be directed to step **526** where it presents additional information from the selected link. The information can be a web page with scrollable information and/or other hyperlinks which can direct a user to other web sites. If instead the user has chosen to act on information that can cause the media processor **106** to perform other tasks, then the portable communication device **116** can proceed to step **528** where it performs a programming function such as programming a DVR. Steps **522**, **524** and **528** can represent, for example, a user navigating a listing of media programs associated with the identified performer (e.g., an EPG showing TV and movie listings with William Shatner), the user choosing to record one or more TV or movie listings of the performer at step **524**, and a transmission at step **528** of

recording instructions directed at a DVR embedded in the media processor **106** or operatively coupled thereto to record the desired programs.

The embodiments of method **500** are non-limiting illustrations of how a user of a portable communication device **116** can view related information of performers of a media program while the media program is being viewed. Viewing performer information with a portable communication device **116** rather than by way of a presentation device **108** (e.g., a TV set) can be more desirable than superimposing or restructuring a viewing area of the media program at the presentation device **108** to accommodate performer information. Method **500** also describes a technique in which multiple viewers of the same media program can have the flexibility to make selections associated with performer information without the viewers disturbing each other.

Upon reviewing the aforementioned embodiments, it would be evident to an artisan with ordinary skill in the art that said embodiments can be modified, reduced, or enhanced without departing from the scope and spirit of the claims described below. For example, method **500** can be adapted so that the media processor **106** can perform all or a portion of the functions of the remote server **130**. For instance, the media processor **106** can be adapted to monitor the live feed associated with the media program and perform image recognition analysis to identify performers from known images. To effectively manage storage resources, the media processor **106** can rely on the remote server **130** to provide images of the performers upon supplying the remote server **130** an identity of the media program. This and other embodiments are contemplated by the present disclosure. In yet another embodiment, method **500** can be adapted so that the media processor **106** is operable to transmit to a portable communication device **116** (upon receiving a request from device **116**) closed captioned information relating to the media program being viewed. In this embodiment the user of the portable communication device **116** can also view closed captioned information without having it presented at the presentation device **108**, thereby not disturbing other viewers who may not have an interest in seeing closed captioned text.

FIG. 6 depicts an exemplary diagrammatic representation of a machine in the form of a computer system **600** within which a set of instructions, when executed, may cause the machine to perform any one or more of the methods discussed above. The machine can operate, for example, as the remote server **130**, the media processor **106**, the gateway **104**, or combinations thereof as described above. In some embodiments, the machine operates as a standalone device. In some embodiments, the machine may be connected (e.g., using a network) to other machines. In a networked deployment, the machine may operate in the capacity of a server or a client user machine in server-client user network environment, or as a peer machine in a peer-to-peer (or distributed) network environment.

The machine may comprise a server computer, a client user computer, a personal computer (PC), a tablet PC, a laptop computer, a desktop computer, a control system, a network router, switch or bridge, or any machine capable of executing a set of instructions (sequential or otherwise) that specify actions to be taken by that machine. It will be understood that a device of the present disclosure includes broadly any electronic device that provides voice, video or data communication. Further, while a single machine is illustrated, the term "machine" shall also be taken to include any collection of machines that individually or jointly execute a set (or multiple sets) of instructions to perform any one or more of the methods discussed herein.

The computer system **600** may include a processor **602** (e.g., a central processing unit (CPU), a graphics processing unit (GPU, or both), a main memory **604** and a static memory **606**, which communicate with each other via a bus **608**. The computer system **600** may further include a video display unit **610** (e.g., a liquid crystal display (LCD), a flat panel, a solid state display, or a cathode ray tube (CRT)). The computer system **600** may include an input device **612** (e.g., a keyboard), a cursor control device **614** (e.g., a mouse), a disk drive unit **616**, a signal generation device **618** (e.g., a speaker or remote control) and a network interface device **620**.

The disk drive unit **616** may include a machine-readable medium **622** on which is stored one or more sets of instructions (e.g., software **624**) embodying any one or more of the methods or functions described herein, including those methods illustrated above. The instructions **624** may also reside, completely or at least partially, within the main memory **604**, the static memory **606**, and/or within the processor **602** during execution thereof by the computer system **600**. The main memory **604** and the processor **602** also may constitute machine-readable media.

Dedicated hardware implementations including, but not limited to, application specific integrated circuits, programmable logic arrays and other hardware devices can likewise be constructed to implement the methods described herein. Applications that may include the apparatus and systems of various embodiments broadly include a variety of electronic and computer systems. Some embodiments implement functions in two or more specific interconnected hardware modules or devices with related control and data signals communicated between and through the modules, or as portions of an application-specific integrated circuit. Thus, the example system is applicable to software, firmware, and hardware implementations.

In accordance with various embodiments of the present disclosure, the methods described herein are intended for operation as software programs running on a computer processor. Furthermore, software implementations can include, but not limited to, distributed processing or component/object distributed processing, parallel processing, or virtual machine processing can also be constructed to implement the methods described herein.

The present disclosure contemplates a machine readable medium containing instructions **624**, or that which receives and executes instructions **624** from a propagated signal so that a device connected to a network environment **626** can send or receive voice, video or data, and to communicate over the network **626** using the instructions **624**. The instructions **624** may further be transmitted or received over a network **626** via the network interface device **620**.

While the machine-readable medium **622** is shown in an example embodiment to be a single medium, the term "machine-readable medium" should be taken to include a single medium or multiple media (e.g., a centralized or distributed database, and/or associated caches and servers) that store the one or more sets of instructions. The term "machine-readable medium" shall also be taken to include any medium that is capable of storing, encoding or carrying a set of instructions for execution by the machine and that cause the machine to perform any one or more of the methods of the present disclosure.

The term "machine-readable medium" shall accordingly be taken to include, but not be limited to: solid-state memories such as a memory card or other package that houses one or more read-only (non-volatile) memories, random access memories, or other re-writable (volatile) memories; and magneto-optical or optical medium such as a disk or tape. Accord-

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ingly, the disclosure is considered to include any one or more of a machine-readable medium or a distribution medium, as listed herein and including art-recognized equivalents and successor media, in which the software implementations herein are stored.

Although the present specification describes components and functions implemented in the embodiments with reference to particular standards and protocols, the disclosure is not limited to such standards and protocols. Each of the standards for Internet and other packet switched network transmission (e.g., TCP/IP, UDP/IP, HTML, HTTP) represent examples of the state of the art. Such standards are periodically superseded by faster or more efficient equivalents having essentially the same functions. Accordingly, replacement standards and protocols having the same functions are considered equivalents.

The illustrations of embodiments described herein are intended to provide a general understanding of the structure of various embodiments, and they are not intended to serve as a complete description of all the elements and features of apparatus and systems that might make use of the structures described herein. Many other embodiments will be apparent to those of skill in the art upon reviewing the above description. Other embodiments may be utilized and derived therefrom, such that structural and logical substitutions and changes may be made without departing from the scope of this disclosure. Figures are also merely representational and may not be drawn to scale. Certain proportions thereof may be exaggerated, while others may be minimized. Accordingly, the specification and drawings are to be regarded in an illustrative rather than a restrictive sense.

Such embodiments of the inventive subject matter may be referred to herein, individually and/or collectively, by the term "invention" merely for convenience and without intending to voluntarily limit the scope of this application to any single invention or inventive concept if more than one is in fact disclosed. Thus, although specific embodiments have been illustrated and described herein, it should be appreciated that any arrangement calculated to achieve the same purpose may be substituted for the specific embodiments shown. This disclosure is intended to cover any and all adaptations or variations of various embodiments. Combinations of the above embodiments, and other embodiments not specifically described herein, will be apparent to those of skill in the art upon reviewing the above description.

The Abstract of the Disclosure is provided with the understanding that it will not be used to interpret or limit the scope or meaning of the claims. In addition, in the foregoing Detailed Description, it can be seen that various features are grouped together in a single embodiment for the purpose of streamlining the disclosure. This method of disclosure is not to be interpreted as reflecting an intention that the claimed embodiments require more features than are expressly recited in each claim. Rather, as the following claims reflect, inventive subject matter lies in less than all features of a single disclosed embodiment. Thus the following claims are hereby incorporated into the Detailed Description, with each claim standing on its own as a separately claimed subject matter.

What is claimed is:

1. A method, comprising:

receiving, by a system comprising a processor, a request from a portable communication device for an identity of a media program that is presented by the system;

transmitting, by the system, the identity of the media program to the portable communication device, for forwarding to a remote server;

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receiving, by the system, a functional command from the portable communication device according to information that is received by the portable communication device from the remote server, wherein the information is related to a performer that is recognized by the remote server as visually present in the media program by way of comparing a frame of a live media feed associated with the media program to an image of the performer associated with the media program; and

performing, by the system, the functional command that is received from the portable communication device.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the information comprises a selectable hyperlink.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the identity of the media program comprises one of a title of the media program, a channel associated with the media program, or a combination thereof.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the method operates in a set-top box.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving a request from a portable communication device for the identity of the media program.

6. The method of claim 5, and wherein the portable communication device is one of a long-range portable wireless communication device, a short-range portable wireless communication device, or combinations thereof.

7. The method of claim 5, further comprising transmitting closed captioned information relating to the media program to the portable communication device.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the remote server accesses the image of the performer associated with the media program according to the identity of the media program.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein selectable portions of the information related to the performer are presented at a display of the portable communication device, and wherein the selectable portions of the information related to the performer comprise one of an identity of the performer, a selection of another media program associated with the performer, advertising material, promotional material, a selectable link to retrieve additional information about the performer, or any combinations thereof.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the selectable portions of the information related to the performer comprise an electronic programming guide (EPG) sorted according to other media programs associated with the performer.

11. The method of claim 1, further comprising directing a digital video recorder to record the media program.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the information related to the performer comprises metadata associated with the media program.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein the image of the performer is stored in a database, and wherein the database is updated when new media programs are available.

14. A device, comprising:

a memory storing executable instructions; and

a processor coupled to the memory, wherein execution of the executable instructions by the processor facilitates performance of operations comprising:

receiving a media program for presentation at a display device;

transmitting an identity of the media program to a portable communication device;

receiving a functional command from the portable communication device according to information received at the portable communication device from a remote server according to the identity of the media program,

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wherein the information is related to a performer that is visually present in the media program, wherein the performer is detected by the remote server at a frame of the media program; and

performing the functional command that is received from the portable communication device. 5

**15.** The device of claim **14**, wherein the remote server compares the frame of the media program to an image of the performer.

**16.** The device of claim **14**, wherein the operations further comprise receiving a request from the portable communication device for the identity of the media program. 10

**17.** The device of claim **14**, wherein the portable communication device transmits the identity of the media program to the remote server.

**18.** A computer-readable storage medium, comprising computer instructions which, responsive to being executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform operations comprising: 15

transmitting an identity of a media program to a portable communication device, wherein the portable communication device transmits the identity of the media program to a remote server; 20

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receiving a command from the portable communication device according to information that is received by the portable communication device from the remote server, wherein the information is related to a person that is recognized as visually present in the media program by way of comparing a frame of the media program to an image of the person associated with the media program; and

executing the command that is received from the portable communication device.

**19.** The computer-readable storage medium of claim **18**, wherein a remote server performs operations for detecting a human figure from the frame of a live media feed of the media program, comparing the human figure to the image of the person, and recognizing the person from the comparing. 15

**20.** The computer-readable storage medium of claim **18**, wherein the operations further comprising receiving a request from a portable communication device for the identity of the media program. 20

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